

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Withdrawn): A powder represented by the formula SiO_x wherein

x is from 0.6 to 1.8 and

the powder has a specific surface area of at least $10 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ and a total content of Na, Fe, Al and Cl of at most 10 ppm.

Claim 2 (Withdrawn): The powder according to Claim 1, wherein x is from 0.9 to 1.6.

Claim 3 (Withdrawn): The powder according to Claim 1, wherein the specific surface area is at least $50 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ and the total content of Na, Fe, Al and Cl is at most 5 ppm.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A method for producing ~~[[the]] a powder as defined in Claim 1, which comprises~~ represented by the formula SiO_x comprising:

reacting ~~[[a]]~~ monosilane gas with a gas capable of oxidizing the monosilane gas in a non-oxidizing gas atmosphere under a pressure of from 10 to 1000 kPa at a temperature of from 500 to 1000°C ,

wherein

x is from 0.6 to 1.8,

the SiO_x powder has a specific surface area of at least $10 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ and a total content of Na, Fe, Al and Cl of at most 10 ppm, and

in the reacting,

the gas capable of oxidizing the monosilane gas is supplied to a high temperature part of a reactor without prior mixing with the monosilane gas, and

the temperature of 500 to 1000°C is obtained by heating the reactor on its periphery.

Claim 5 (Previously presented): The method according to Claim 4, wherein the contentin molar ratio of the non-oxidizing gas is at least twice the total amount of the monosilane gas and oxygen participating in the oxidation of the gas capable of oxidizing the monosilane gas.

Claim 6 (Previously presented): The method according to Claim 4, wherein the gas capable of oxidizing the monosilane gas is oxygen, air, NO₂, CO₂ or H₂O.

Claim 7 (Previously presented): The method according to Claim 4, wherein the non-oxidizing gas is argon or helium.

Claim 8 (Previously presented): The method according to Claim 4, wherein the pressure is from 50 to 300 kPa and the temperature is from 500 to 1000°C.

Claim 9 (Withdrawn): An interlayer dielectric film of a semiconductor device, a gas barrier film of a solar battery, a gas barrier film of a food packaging film or a protective film of an optical component, which comprises the SiO_x powder as defined in Claim 1.

Claim 10 (Previously presented): The method according to Claim 4, wherein the reactor and gas introduction pipes are made of quartz.

Claim 11 (Previously presented): The method according to Claim 4, wherein the value of x in the formula SiO_x is produced by changing the proportion of the monosilane gas to the oxidizing gas.

Claim 12 (Previously presented): The method according to Claim 4, wherein the SiO_x powder is recovered by a powder recovery apparatus.

Claim 13 (Previously presented): The method according to Claim 4, wherein the residual time of the monosilane gas and oxidizing gas in the reactor is from 0.2 to 1 second.

Claim 14 (Previously presented): The method according to Claim 4, wherein the reacting is at a temperature of 550 to 950°C.

Claim 15 (Previously presented): The method according to Claim 4, wherein the reacting is at a temperature of 650 to 850°C.